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Congress of the United States
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IN EUROPE (U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION)

April 18, 2022

The Honorable Antony Blinken
United States Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

As the Administration continues to sanction individuals responsible for enabling Putin's war in Ukraine, I urge you to place travel bans on foreign enablers of Russian oligarchs. Oligarchs, who hire lawyers to engage in abusive lawsuits against journalists to silence them, cannot exert malign influence in our system and the systems of our democratic allies without their enablers. To get at the heart of this problem, the United States must establish deterrents for foreign enablers serving individuals who are undermining democracy and hold to account those enablers who are currently performing this unscrupulous work. One method of deterrence is limiting the privilege of traveling to the United States.

Among the worst such enablers have been certain lawyers in the United Kingdom. Despite our close ties with the United Kingdom, the nature of its libel laws and the vast amount of blood money in its financial system make it an ideal place for oligarchs to abuse the law to harass and intimidate. The recent Helsinki Commission hearing "Countering Oligarchs, Enablers, and Lawfare" demonstrated how this system of abuse operates and just how destructive such lawsuits can be. Testimony from Bill Browder and Scott Stedman, and a statement for the record from Arabella Pike of HarperCollins, publisher of Catherine Belton's book *Putin's People*,

demonstrate how all three have had to face down aggressive lawfare in their efforts to expose the truth.

The following is a list of individuals who have enabled malign activities of Russian oligarchs and I ask that you review each name in consideration of banning their visas to the United States:

- Nigel Tait of Carter-Ruck, who has acted on behalf of Kremlin oil champion Rosneft on abusive suits against Catherine Belton and HarperCollins and worked for Gennady Timchenko in seeking to stifle investigative reporting.
- John Kelly of Harbottle & Lewis, who represented Roman Abramovich in his abusive lawsuit against Catherine Belton and HarperCollins.
- Hugh Tomlinson, who represented Roman Abramovich, Mikhail Fridman, and Petr Aven in abusive suits against Catherine Belton and HarperCollins.
- Geraldine Proudler of CMS, who worked for Mikhail Fridman and Petr Aven in abusive suits against HarperCollins and worked for Major Pavel Karpov, formerly of the Russian Interior Ministry, in an abusive suit against Bill Browder.
- Keith Schilling of Shillings, who is well known for bringing abusive suits against journalists and worked tirelessly to protect the fugitive Malaysian businessman Jho Low, is accused by U.S. prosecutors of running a money laundering scheme to embezzle billions of dollars from Malaysian state investment fund, 1MDB. Schillings sent legal threats to UK booksellers to prevent them from selling a book about their clients that was published by reporters working for The Wall Street Journal.
- Shlomo Rechtschaffen, who is representing Walter Soriano, an enabler of Oleg Deripaska, Roman Abramovich, and Dmitry Rybolovlev, in an abusive lawsuit against Scott Stedman.

These denials could be implemented under 212(a)(3)(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act for potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences, 7031(c) anti-kleptocracy and human rights visa bans, or other authorities. Ideally, the bans would be made public under 7031(c).

While the Biden administration and our allies have imposed sanctions on Russian oligarchs since the brutal full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, the enablers of kleptocracy have remained untouched. The United States must crack down on both oligarchs and enablers to end the system of global corruption that made possible this horrific war.

As always, I remain,

Most Sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

CC: Attorney General Merrick Garland